

of the physician. The modern doctor is using fewer and fewer drugs, and the stimulated interest in drug using inculcated by drug concerns is to be condemned unreservedly. Commercial salesmanship, while laudable in most lines, must observe the strict proprieties of real service, absolute honesty and complete deference to the scientific training and ideals of physicians, if it is not to fall into disfavor as a whole. Useful drugs should be purveyed to the medical profession not by an advocate but by a guarantor of quality alone. We do not go rightfully to the drug house to learn our therapeutics nor do we thank the drug house for seeking to do our thinking for us.

#### FULTON'S COMPOUNDS

Physicians have received within the past year literature purporting to emanate from the John J. Fulton Company, San Francisco, extolling the virtues of certain preparations in glycosuria and albuminuria. The preparations are for sale, it is said, by all important wholesale drug houses. Extravagant and unsupported claims are made for these preparations, extravagant in that they claim or suggest improvement in all cases, even when all other methods have failed, and unsupported in that no controlled scientific laboratory investigations are reported.

Space is devoted to the matter here simply to advise physicians to leave these nostrums alone. Their formula is not given, in spite of the printed claim that it is not a secret preparation. Even direct written request to the company failed to elicit any definite statement disclosing the formula. There is no reason to believe that the preparations have any virtue in the conditions advertised. The method of advertisement is unethical, in that a secret nostrum is extolled for serious and common diseases, and no opportunity is afforded for control of the statements made.

There is no reason for believing that these nostrums are any whit different from the "Fulton's Compounds" described in "Nostrums for Kidney Diseases and Diabetes," issued by the American Medical Association in 1917. The usual story came out then, showing how case after case which had "testified" as to the curative virtues of these nostrums, had a little later died of their diseases. Nothing is easier to get than unimpeachable testimonials, and nothing is more worthless. The serious danger lies in a commercial concern advertising self-treatment for such dangerous diseases as nephritis and diabetes and bolstering up its claims by specious testimonials and unworthy medical evidence.

In the absence of any indication of scientific merit in these nostrums, and in the absence of any indication that they differ in content or advertising from the "Fulton's Compounds" of four years ago, it is much to be hoped that no physician will be deluded by their claims or lend a credulous ear to their appeal for exploitation. Under no circumstances is a physician justified in giving a preparation of unknown formula to his patient.

The following paragraph from the Journal of the American Medical Association of January 29,

1916, ought to be re-read and deeply pondered by each physician: "Thus, on a foundation of misrepresentation, fraud and deceit is reared the stupendous superstructure of the 'patent medicine' business—a trade whose millions corrupt legislatures, prostitute no small portion of the press and are a standing menace to the public health. Some day an enlightened public opinion will demand the destruction of this evil—and the dawn of that day is not very far off."

#### Editorial Comment

The wonder grows that any legislative body can appropriate huge sums for repairing the damage wrought by disease, and yet almost ignore the known means of preventing disease. Public health is purchasable, and is a vastly better public bargain than treatment of disease and death.

You will find about as many doctors friendly to you as you treat like friends. Sir Francis Bacon said that words of praise and recognition were becoming in the mouth of a friend but might be most unseemly in one's own mouth.

Someone should estimate the proportion of the fear of disease which is due to patent-medicine advertising. An enlightened press will yet put these vipers out of business.

The well man is entitled to as skillful diagnosis and advice as the sick man. Does he get it? A clinic for the well, and periodic physical examination, are among the best insurance measures which have yet been proposed.

Noguchi has prepared successfully a vaccine against yellow fever which is now being used to good advantage in the endemic zones. Persons who have been successfully vaccinated with this material are no longer subject to yellow fever quarantine detention in Central America.

County societies and smaller groups will be interested to know that lantern slides and movie films on health topics can be procured from the State Board of Health, the only charge being the prepayment of expressage both ways.

Slides may be had on tuberculosis, child welfare, and communicable diseases. Also films on the following subjects:

- "How Life Begins"—4 reels
- "War on the Mosquito"—1 reel
- "The Trump Card," on milk pasteurization—2 reels
- "The Error of Omission" on birth registration—1 reel
- "The Rat Menace"—1 reel.

For information relative to "How Life Begins" communicate with the Bureau of Social Hygiene, 214 Lachman Building, San Francisco, and for information relative to the slides on Tuberculosis communicate with the Bureau of Tuberculosis, 726 Forum Building, Sacramento. The other slides and films are on hand at the executive office of the State Board of Health, Sacramento.